

Wells County Commissioner's Meeting Minutes May 5, 2026

The May meeting was called to order by Chairman Dockter at 8:00 AM. Present at the meeting were Stan Buxa, Dennis Dockter, Bryan Lutt, Danny Maxwell, Brian Miller, Lydia Gessele, and Daniel Stutlien.

Added to the agenda was assessed valuation in Hurdsfield and Bowdon.

SB (*M*), BM (*S*) to approve the minutes from the April Meeting. Unanimously carried.

DM (*M*), BL (*S*) to approve the minutes from the April Special Meeting held April 15th. Unanimously carried.

Employee timesheets were reviewed by the commissioners.

BM (*M*), DM (*S*) to approve the bills as presented. Unanimously carried.

The current WC Balance Sheet was reviewed and discussed. Also, the Auditor shared current county investments as well as Commission controlled WC funds. SB (*M*), BL (*S*) to approve the Balance Sheet. Unanimously carried.

DM (*M*), BM (*S*) to approve Laura Muscha, Treasurer, and Daniel Stutlien, Auditor, to purchase or cash out CD's and investments on behalf of WC. Unanimously carried. WC Auditor Daniel Stutlien shared information on the current status of Prairie Dog Funds.

Correspondence received this month included a letter from the State Tax Commissioner verifying Wells County's accurate application of all funds granted for the '24 PRC program year, an informational update guide and project map from Flickertail Wind regarding their proposed project in Eddy and Wells Counties, and a notice that this week is designated as Aquatic Nuisance Species Awareness Week.

Regarding Commission appointments for the Wells County Soils Committee, Tax Director Jana Mogren distributed the map of WC Soils Board Districts. SB (*M*), BM (*S*) to appoint John Hitz (#5), Richard Lynne (#3), Dale Mason (#4), Jeff Mertz (#10), Lowell Rau (#8), Gary Schmitz (#1), and Brad Tweed (#6) for seats on the Board. Unanimously carried. Positions still needed to be filled are in Districts #2, #7, #9.

Commission Portfolios were discussed.

Under the Public Comments portion of the meeting, no one was signed up to address the Commission.

Haylee Viger addressed the Commission telephonically regard the ND Department of Agriculture's Regional Livestock Development and Planning Grant Program. Viger went through an in-depth presentation with the Commission for ag and livestock planning and development and how those elements relate to current zoning in WC. 40 of 53 ND counties are currently involved in the program and, if the county chooses to get on board, completion of an evaluation of roads, water, and electrical capacity within WC would be conducted to determine good, better, and best locations for ag development. Grant funding would cover the costs of this evaluation for both county and the townships. The Commission then discussed the possibilities of getting on board. The grant provides \$12,000 for the county and \$500 for each township

included in the application. SB (M), BL (S) to approve joining the grant program. Unanimously carried. See Resolution below.

WC Road Foreman, Brent Keller, sat with the Commission to discuss matters of his Dept. Keller briefly discussed tar-carting that has been completed on the 7 miles from Harvey to WC #4 and from US 52 north to Wellsburg. A heating element will need to be replaced in the oil tank. An interview was conducted for an hybrid employee for the department, but no hires have been made to this point. A part-time employee has returned and is working in the department. Festival Hall building basement has a couple inches of water in it. Water has been turned off at the Fairgrounds until it can be established if or where there is a leak. Two new pumps will be purchased for the basement.

The Commission also was provided the contract for the bridge replacement scheduled for this summer on WC #1 north of Fessenden. Also placed in the Commission's packet was Wold Engineering's Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) proposal to provide some lane widening for safety purposes on both Old #52 west of Fessenden, and WC #69 south of Sykeston. These projects will be discussed when Wold Engineering returns to meet with the Commission as neither of them would take place in '26.

WC Sheriff, Chris Kluth, was not able to meet with the Commission. Janelle Pepple, WC Sheriff's Dept. Office Deputy, addressed the Commission on behalf of Sheriff Kluth. Pepple shared the Dept is currently posting a Deputy Sheriff position. The department is currently strapped for help due to a multitude of circumstances. Pepple also shared a proposal from Lexipol, which is policy manual guidance for the department. The proposal is \$5,750 annually. Pepple then, on behalf of herself, spoke with the Commission about her inability to utilize her vacation leave due to circumstances of the department. SB (M), BL (S) to approve Pepple carrying over her vacation leave without forfeiting the time over the course of six months. Unanimously carried.

The Commission considered a day off for the WCEG in lieu of Juneteenth. SB (M), BL (S) to approve Thursday, July 2nd, as a day off for the employee group. Unanimously carried.

WC Auditor Daniel Stutlien shared information with the Commission regarding the June Primary Election. Absentee applications are now being fulfilled as we have received our ballots. WC has secured all election workers and training for those workers will be conducted Tuesday, May 26th, at 4:00 PM at the KTL. During training, L&A Testing will also be performed on all election machines. The election will be held Tuesday, June 9th, with votes centers at the Bowdon Fire Hall, Festival Hall, and Harvey City Armory with polls open from 8:00 AM to 7:00 PM. An audit described by the State Auditor's Office will be conducted Monday, June 15th, and the Canvassing Board will meet at 10:00 AM Monday, June 22nd, to finalize the Primary Election. Lastly, Stutlien shared a publication ballot of all contests in WC, and will be speaking at a variety of upcoming civic club meetings.

A gaming permit was submitted on behalf of the Harvey Eagles Club to renew their permit at Peaceful Valley Golf Course. SB (M), DM (S) to approve the gaming permit request. Unanimously carried.

In light of last month's visit from representatives of Garrison Diversion, the RRVWS Project was discussed by the Commission. The anticipation is they will be applying for permits in the very near future. Concerns exists to ensure the permits are followed and both property and infrastructure are, at the very least, returned to its former condition.

A telecommuting agreement for WC Auditor Daniel Stutlien following the July 7th Commission meeting through Tuesday, July 21st, was considered. DM (M), BM (S) to approve the agreement. Unanimously carried. The Auditor office will be closed during this time, but Stutlien will be available by phone throughout this period.

The Commission discussed topics and the manner in which they would like to meet with all 36 townships in the latter part of June. Meeting locations have been secured in Bowdon, Fessenden, Hamberg, Harvey, Hurdsfield, and Sykeston. Road maintenance, budgeting and levies, township concerns and ideas, zoning and permits, and general information were suggested topics.

The Assessments of properties in Hurdsfield and Bowdon were added to the agenda. The controversy surrounds the increases in the assessed valuation of properties in those areas. The consensus of the Commission is to strongly encourage the use of the Computer Aided Mass Appraisal (CAMA) system by all assessors in WC to determine assessed values.

The next Six-County Meeting will be held in Napoleon (*Logan Co.*) Tuesday, May 26th, at 10:00 AM.

The next regular meeting of the WC Commission will be held Thursday, June 4th, at 8:00 AM in the KTL Building.

The next WC Departments meeting will be held Wednesday, May 27th, at 11:30 AM and will be a WCEG picnic.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:50 AM.

The following Fees and Receipts were approved and ordered filed:

Clerk of Court	\$	210.00
Recorder	\$	0.00
Sheriff	\$	735.00
Misc.	\$	52,407.76

On motion, the following bills were ordered paid: (*Gross wages, when listed*)

#Direct Deposit	Payroll, General (1000)	\$	95,517.20
#Direct Deposit	Payroll, Road (2001)	\$	47,465.97
#Direct Deposit	Payroll, 911 (2003)	\$	1,351.39
#Direct Deposit	Payroll, County Agent (2005)	\$	3,312.21
#Direct Deposit	Payroll, Social Welfare (2007)	\$	63,155.64
#ACH BC/BS	Insurance	\$	64,525.96
#ACH NDPERS	Retirement	\$	32,566.34

May-26 General

ODP Business Solutions, LLC	\$72.95
Wells County Treasurer	\$678.92
Pitney Bowes	\$114.75
NDTC	\$741.46
Wells County Treasurer	\$358.13
Central City H2O+	\$180.00
Central Plains Water	\$200.59
Fessenden City	\$241.60
Fessenden City	\$197.29

Wells County Treasurer	\$125.50
Weigelt Refrigeration	\$283.04
Wells County Treasurer	\$252.31
4U Custom Apparel LLC	\$550.00
ES & S	\$3,470.88
Herald Press	\$132.86
Frey Insurance	\$5,333.00
Advanced Business Methods	\$152.00
The Village Family Service Center	\$2,000.00
Wells County Treasurer	\$39.72
ITD	\$1,480.60
NDACo Resources Group	\$2,369.33
NDTC	\$100.68
Tyler Technologies	\$904.60
ND State Treasurer	\$105.00
Carrie Krause	\$297.25
Denyce A Harding	\$198.65
Jana Mogren	\$289.28
Sidwell Company	\$740.00
Vanguard Appraisals	\$2,150.00
ND State Radio	\$120.00
Farmers Union Oil-Fessenden	\$337.78
Kotaco Fuel & Propane	\$254.87
Kreiter Autoworks, Inc.	\$186.71
Wells County Treasurer	\$529.78
NDTC	\$61.88
Wells County Treasurer	\$114.14
Fessenden City	\$328.70
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	\$25,694.25

HB1066

Wold Engineering	\$8,325.00
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911

ND State Radio	\$22,946.88
Janelle Pepple	\$176.90
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	\$23,123.78

Jail & Trans

HACTC	\$100.00
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Co. Agent

Leaf	\$235.91
NDTC	\$124.07
Ciera Kotaska	\$348.90
Connie Loen	\$336.40
Wells County Treasurer	\$440.00

NDSU-Ag Budget Office	\$7,250.01
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	\$8,735.29

HSZ

Alicia Lamm	\$105.69
Wells County Treasurer	\$143.09
Kreiter Autoworks, Inc.	\$126.00
Wells County Treasurer	\$435.00
Wells County Treasurer	\$42.77
Wells County Treasurer	\$76.98
Wells County Treasurer	\$86.01
Farmers Union Oil-Fessenden	\$401.81
Little Mart	\$54.00
Patriot Fuels	\$401.17
B & B Service and Repair LLC	\$30.90
Bessette Motors, Inc.	\$71.52
Dale's Radiator & Repair	\$67.95
Farmers Union Oil-Fessenden	\$41.35
4th Corporation	\$140.00
Advanced Business Methods	\$252.95
Leaf	\$312.00
Wells County Treasurer	\$297.09
Dakota Central	\$171.80
NDTC	\$557.75
Wells County Treasurer	\$395.40
Central City H2O+	\$180.00
ITD	\$132.17
NDACo Resources Group	\$960.00
Wells County Treasurer	\$525.04
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	\$6,008.44

Weed Control

Donna Rau	\$220.87
Benson County Farmers Press	\$144.20
Foster County Independent	\$140.00
Herald Press	\$72.00
Transcript Publishing	\$112.00
The Arthur Companies	\$385.00
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	\$1,074.07

Hwy. Tax

Weigelt Refrigeration	\$3,825.00
Farmers Union Oil-Fessenden	\$127.56
Harvey Oil Co.	\$10,591.36
Kotaco Fuel & Propane	\$470.00
Auto Value Carrington	\$697.48
Butler Machinery	\$1,159.32
Gary Kaul	\$1,500.00

High Plains Equipment	\$212.20
Lautt's Auto Body & Towing	\$928.90
NAPA-Harvey	\$4,322.79
Patzer Truck Repair	\$88.53
Power Plan	\$3,348.88
Wells County Treasurer	\$109.99
Lemer's ACE & Rental	\$137.79
Linde Gas & Equipment	\$321.65
Wells County Treasurer	\$1,033.05
NDTC	\$145.42
Wells County Treasurer	\$125.62
Cathay City	\$95.00
Fessenden City	\$254.96
Harvey City	\$65.20
Northern Plains Electric	\$439.93
Otter Tail	\$280.24
Sykeston City	\$98.00
Verendrye Electric	\$31.07
Opdahl Enterprise	\$11,475.00
Deere Credit	\$6,750.00
Tyler Technologies	\$354.60
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	\$48,989.54

Estimate Tax

Tawnia Heilman	\$40.00
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Mobile Homes

Wells County Treasurer	\$14,061.76
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24-7

Office Of Attorney General	\$73.00
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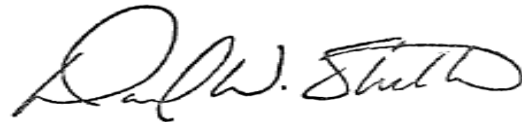
\$136,225.13

Approved:



**Dennis T. Dockter,
Wells County Commission Chairman**

Attest:



**Daniel W. Stutlien,
Wells County Auditor**

Wells County Resolution No. 20261003

A Resolution of the Wells County Board of Commissioners

Re: Approval of an agreement between the County of Wells and the South Central Regional Council for the purpose of Regional Livestock Planning Grant acceptance

WHEREAS, the Wells County Commission, on behalf of the County of Wells, desires to enter into agreement with the South Central Regional Council to apply for a Regional Livestock Planning Grant for which the county is eligible. The agreement further provides Wells County with identification of suitable locations for rural economic development, including animal feeding operations, agricultural processing and storage facilities, and other agricultural related development.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Commissioners of Wells County, State of North Dakota, as follows:

- Following completion of the site analysis process, Wells County will review county and township zoning and land use regulations. The County may update any zoning or land use regulations based on recommendations of the site analysis process. Additionally, Wells County will provide information to townships within the county so they may review and update zoning and land use regulations either as necessary or as they see fit.
- That **Dennis T. Dockter**, Chair of the Wells County Commission, and **Daniel W. Stutlien**, Wells County Auditor, are authorized to sign this agreement.

Passed and adopted in Wells County this 5th day of May, 2026.

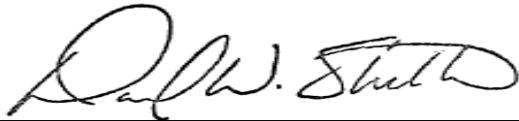
Wells County Board of Commissioners

By:



Dennis T. Dockter, Commission Chair

Attest:



Daniel W. Stutlien, County Auditor